

**INTERNATIONAL  
FEDERATION OF  
AMERICAN FOOTBALL**

**FOOTBALL RULES  
AND  
INTERPRETATIONS**

**2017 EDITION**

## Foreword

The rules are revised each year by IFAF to improve the sport's level of safety and quality of play, and to clarify the meaning and intent of rules where needed. The principles that govern all rule changes are that they must:

- be safe for the participants;
- be applicable at all levels of the sport;
- be coachable;
- be administrable by the officials;
- maintain a balance between offense and defence;
- be interesting to spectators;
- not have a prohibitive economic impact; and
- retain some affinity with the rules adopted by NCAA in the USA.

IFAF statutes require all member federations to play by IFAF rules, except in the following regards:

1. national federations may adapt Rule 1 to meet local needs and circumstances, provided no adaption reduces the safety of the players or other participants;
2. competitions may adjust the rules according to (a) the age group of the participants and (b) the gender of the participants;
3. competition authorities have the right to amend certain specific rules (listed on page 13);
4. national federations may restrict the above so that the same regulations apply to all competitions under their jurisdiction.

These rules apply to all IFAF organised competitions and take effect from 1st March 2017. National federations may adopt them earlier for their domestic competitions.

For brevity, male pronouns are used extensively in this book, but the rules are equally applicable to female and male participants.

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